

Revulsion Against Social Change

IT is obvious that people do not welcome social change. A few resist it vigorously; some oppose it with a cold resentment; most go along with it, regretfully; and a few help to facilitate it. People are not against 'progress,' of course; but what they regard as an interest in progress has scant relationship to any active support for fundamental social change. What they tend to support are those things that will enhance their own positions in the status quo; that is, they want to climb economically and socially in the system, but they want the system to remain much as it is. When they become 'socially minded,' it is usually through the technique of identifying their personal frustrations with the 'unjust' suppression or persecution of some minority group and through developing a crusading zeal for elevating the status of that minority group as a whole, but themselves in particular. The crusader wants his group to rise higher in the system than it is, but he wants his own position to rise higher than the general rise of his group.

Militant crusades for social reform do result in changes of a sort, but usually in terms of philosophical concepts rather than in the structure of the social foundations. Women have been accorded the right to own property, to participate in business enterprise, to engage in a wide variety of remunerative employments, and to vote at political elections. Labor has won the right to work fewer hours, to receive higher pay, to live in better houses, and to own more gadgets. Farmers have been socially and economically advanced by gaining more government paternalism, granted in exchange for votes and a quiescent attitude regarding the status quo. Little business has been granted considerable protection from competition. The claims of religious and racial minorities for more tolerant recognition have gained much support. Crusades for these and many other causes have been productive of some results; although in most cases the alleged 'results' have been nothing more than the *effects* of a more fundamental change introduced by the application of science to the problems of man and society. Without a concurrent advance in the use of technology, it is doubtful that any of the 'results' mentioned here would have been achieved by crusading alone.

In fact, it is very doubtful whether the social gains from all of the crusades for piecemeal social reform that have been waged were worth the effort expended on them. At best, the direct results have been merely ripples on the surface, and these are

capable of receding even faster than they arose, as illustrated by the barbaric social degradation that accompanied the upsurge of fascism in Europe just before and during World War II. *Any social reform* which depends upon human consent and continued vigilance is, indeed, fragile. *To be effective and permanent, the change must occur as a fundamental alteration of the structure and function of the social mechanism.* Such changes are dreaded by the people (before they happen) and are almost always introduced without popular consent. But, once they have happened, they are proudly lauded and tenaciously defended by the same people.

Conservatism is strongly imbedded in the chromosomes of the human race; hence, social change is not inherent in human nature, rather, it must be regarded as contrary to human nature. Through the hundreds of centuries that the human race was struggling NOT to rise above its existing social level, the social rewards went to the conservative, conventional imitator of the existing social patterns. The innovator was the dreaded heretic. If his innovations did not eliminate him, the chances are his fellow men did. The slowness of the rise of man was, not due to the lack of ingenuity or inventiveness, but rather to the conservative traditions of the prevailing social orders. The introduction of change came through accident; not so much the accident of innovations as the accident of their survival and acceptance. The great responsibility of the presiding guardians of the social groups was not that their social entities should progress, but rather, that they should avoid progression, and that would-be progressives should receive the proper 'treatment.'

Future Frightens Intellectuals

Thus, through the process of natural selection, the human tendencies to remain the same have been preserved in the chromosomes and the tendencies to seek something different have been culled out. A general revulsion against social change and a nostalgia for the ways of the recent past are deeply ingrained aspects of human nature. This phenomenon, along with the fact that we are now experiencing the most rapid change in man's social history, accounts for the epidemic of intellectual vomiting that is going on among the would-be protectors of man's social destiny and human values. Thus, such writers as Francois Mauriac, George Orwell, Kurt Vonnegut, Aldous Huxley, and many others view the future of

'materialistic progress' with a dim eye and seek retreat into the haven of the social mores, customs, and values of their own youths.

It is amazing, yet understandable when one knows the biological basis for it, that these people who most fear future social change are just as reluctant to abrogate past social change as they are to accept the new. They never advocate a return to the life of the cave man, for example, or even to the customs and values of a few centuries ago. Their nostalgia hovers about the customs, ideals, and values which prevailed in the locality and days of their own childhoods. Those are the things they grew up with and which they understand. When they review the present or look into the future, the customs and values look different from those they have known and they become frightened, or at least apprehensive, about their effects on the 'spiritual side' of man. Rather than seek a new understanding, they, in their conservatism, retreat subjectively to the more pleasant memories of their childhood and feel that 'too much' mechanical progress is somehow 'not good' for man. *They feel that we should declare a moratorium on all progress and repudiate some of that which has already occurred.*

These intellectual conservatives usually have a root in some ecclesiastical creed, which, by virtue of its 'infallibility,' cannot adapt to changes of a degree that is obvious to the individual during his lifetime; and, therefore, it follows that the change and not the creed must be rejected. Even so, many changes in beliefs (such as beliefs regarding the shape of the earth and the nature of the sun) have been quietly instituted after the defensive battles have turned from them to some more recent controversy and the leading protagonists of the old beliefs have died off.

What are some of the things about the future that frighten the professional intellectual conservatives and turn them into reactionaries? What is it they yearn for in place of what they fear will come? The field of their revulsion is wide, so we shall take only a few representative examples.

One of the things that frightens them most of all is *the idea of freedom from toil for the human being*. They argue that the normal human likes to work; that, if you take him away from his work, he will become bored with his freedom, will sicken with ennui, and will become a ripe dupe for anyone who comes along and advocates the destruction of the machines that have deprived him of his cherished drudgery. Destroying some of the machines would be all right in their estimation, but they are afraid that the momentum of the mob reaction may go 'too far.'

For some reason, that would seem strange to the logician, but not to the biologist, their yearning for the past does not go back so far as the days of universal slavery, nor even to the 84-hour work-week; rather, it goes back only to the 40 or 44-hour week (plus some overtime, maybe). In the same way, we can anticipate that similar writers of the future will become nostalgic about the 24 or 28-hour week (with no overtime). The writers of today have graduated from the revulsion over workers being demoralized by the 8-hour day, which was the pet peeve of their predecessors on this same theme. It is not the 8-hour day, *but the 4-hour or 2-hour workday that bothers them now.*

Factories Without Men 'Evil'

The intellectual reactionaries of a few decades ago deplored the passing of the small home workshop with its handicraft industries, and they resented the creeping 'evil' of the factory assembly line, lamenting that it was turning human beings into mere cogs in the machine. It was reasoned that the human being, doing only one small detail in the production of something, could not have a constructive pride in his work or feel that he was really making something that reflected his personality, like in the handicraft days when the same individual made all parts of the item he produced. That phase of nostalgia has now nearly passed. The present crop of writers tend to



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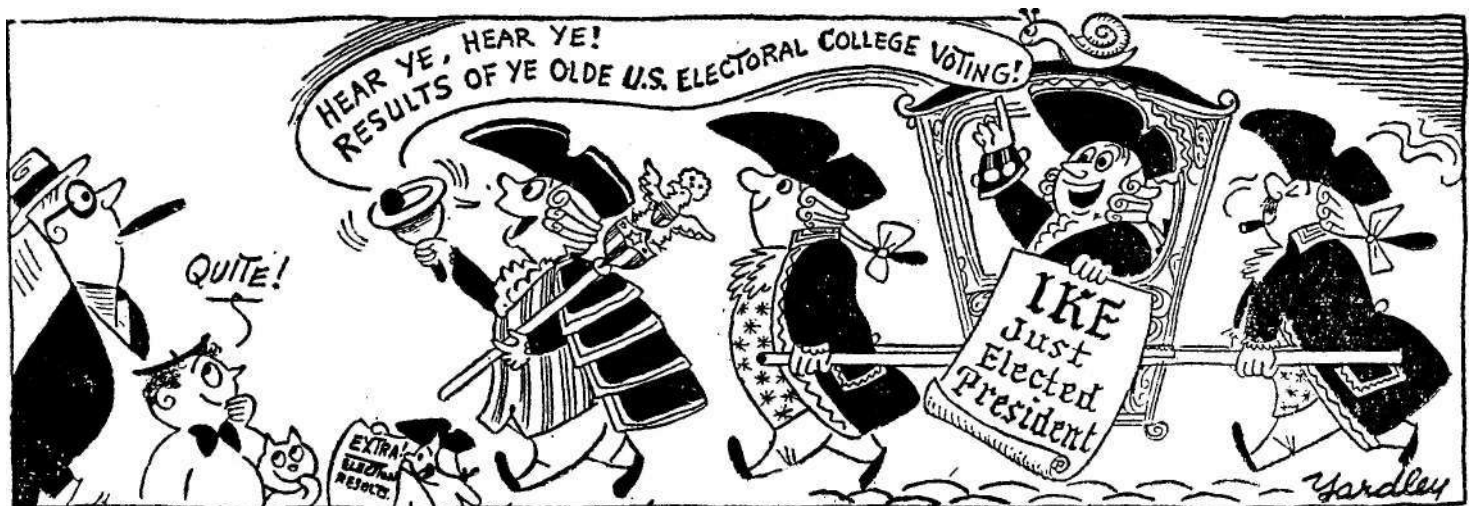
feel a pride in the assembly line that employed thousands of happy workers, who felt that they were, personally and with their own hands and skill, contributing to the manufacture of automobiles, radios, washing machines, and other gadgets — who felt that they were needed and that their work was useful to mankind. What this crop of writers wails about is *the automatic factory — the factory that turns out an abundance of complex things—WITHOUT ANY MEN AT ALL!* You can hear them crying out their souls: How can people feel pride in things that are not made by human hands. Automatic factories will soon deprive people of the privilege of using their muscles and skills in production. And the automatic appliances that are produced by automatic factories will de-humanize the home. The joys Mom has in washing the clothes and hanging them out on the line, of cooking meals on the semi-automatic electric range, of sweeping the floors with a vacuum cleaner will become only memories; after a while, then, people won't remember those things at all.

A generation ago, their predecessors wailed because the delightful home, wherein Mom churned butter, baked bread, knitted stockings, and made clothes for the family (without benefit of Soap Operas on the radio to relieve the monotony), was fading memory, and they were shedding tears over that. In the near future, Mom will have no work to do and few decisions to make around the home. Home won't be like home anymore, will it? Poor Mom! How can life possibly be worth living for her? Wouldn't it be grand if she could go back to doing something about the house so that she could feel that she was needed there and belonged there? No, not back to scrubbing floors on her knees, or rubbing clothes clean on a washboard, or firing a wood-burning cookstove with pieces of wood carried in from the pile out near the backhouse — we don't have to go back that far; after all, we've made some progress since then. But it would be nice, wouldn't it?, if she could go back to the kitchen stove with

controls that are set by hand, and the floor-waxing machine which she can guide across the floor while an electric motor does the work, and the washing machine that will let her do SOMETHING (so she could take a break from watching television during the Soap Opera commercials). Ah, those were the good old days, we'll proclaim. That was when Mom felt that she was somebody; that she was needed; and that her work was appreciated because she had given of herself to it. Now, what is there in life for Mom? No work. A house that takes care of itself. Appliances that do their own thinking and turn themselves on and off. No maids to instruct, or worry about, or scold for incompetence.

Fear Life - Long Security

Well, so much for Mom. Suppose you are a man who is living a half century from now. What will you be doing? There will be no work in the factories for you. Nor in the offices; in fact, very few offices will be needed. All that paper work that required the employment of millions will be unnecessary, or it will be done by machines that don't make mistakes. You won't be wondering if the time is opportune for you to sneak out for a smoke or a cup of coffee on the boss's time, or if it is near enough quitting time for you to leave without being conspicuous. It is true for a period during the prime of your life you will have a functional designation and will give a few hours of attention per week to some operation of the functional mechanism that provides for the requirements of the population, but you could hardly call THAT a job. What are you going to do with the rest of your time? Wouldn't it be nice if you could go back a few decades, to working those four six-hour shifts per week, with a pay envelope every Thursday afternoon; and the long evening at the bar celebrating the end of the four-day work-week; and the long week-end, puttering around the house, doing chores for the 'missus,' and taking that annoying drive through the countryside in congested traffic on



Saxon Government

Sunday afternoon? And that happy feeling of going back to work Monday morning?

The intellectual reactionaries have a fear of what abundance will do to the character of future man. What incentive will a person have, if he receives a folder of Certificates every month, winter and summer, so long as he lives, and no questions asked? With them he can purchase anything he can use, and all he can use; and everyone else can do the same. You would feel like a parasite (or a politician), wouldn't you, taking income that you have not earned? You will miss the joys of counting your dollars and dimes (after tax deductions) to determine what bills you can pay now and what things you can make down payments on, and which ones you will have to postpone until another month or another year. Think of the great ecstasy that used to come with the realization that you had saved up enough for a down-payment on a new car. That won't happen anymore; for, you can have a really functional car anytime you want one, merely by presenting your driver's license. Further, you will always have a dwelling to live in, with no rent and no dickerings with landlords; and you won't even have the privilege or ordering and paying for fuel oil, like in the good old days. Ah, that was the time, when a man had a few things to keep his mind occupied, like, for example, how long would he and his family be able to stay in the place where they then lived, or would he be able to keep his job until the worst of the bills were paid?

The one haunting thing that always lurks in the background of the specious arguments against social change is the fear that, if human beings have abundance, life-long security, and freedom from toil, they will cease to pay enough homage to the gods who preside over scarcity, poverty, property values, and untimely death. They fear that it will not be so easy to sell people promises of a favored position in a Free Enterprise, Price System hereafter. If the underprivileged 'masses' do not have a duty and obligation to earn their sustenance with sweat and blood and tears, they might develop the concept that they have a Divine Right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Imagine the problem of trying to tell such 'misguided' people that members of 'their class' are not entitled to the finer things in life unless they can establish title to them through inheritance, successful predation, ingenious chicanery, or singular luck. Such an effort, we suspect, would be about as fruitful as attempting to explain to the postwar debutante that a modern home, a new car, a fur coat, and a diamond ring should not be hers by right of marriage, but only by right of long-term toil and sacrifice.

It is so easy for people to lose sight of the 'true values' and 'immutable verities.' People find it very easy to forego their poverty, their toil, their insecurity, and their yearning for a decent status in the hereafter, if the alternative is abundance of the material things of life, plenty of leisure, and security for the rest of their lives. *The moralists are not in favor of improving the general human welfare, but*

only in persuading people that they should be more content with their hardships and misfortunes; and, if necessary (as it seems always to be), that they should share their scarcity a little more equitably with those who are still worse off — through organized charity institutions, of course.

Yes, it is verifiable that people do not welcome social change; but the change that they welcome least of all is a change from a higher to a lower socio-economic status, and doubly so if this change is accompanied by increasing toil and insecurity. How many wealthy people have you known who burned down or abandoned their swank houses, gave away their money, and dismissed their servants, so that they could return to the joys of living in a small, unpretentious house, working long hours for a low wage, and doing their own chores, in order to escape the ennui of being rich and idle and to recapture the simple values of the common man? Maybe it happens in fiction books (written by moral philosophers), but, if it happens in real life, we have yet to see an example.

The present generation of Americans has experienced the most profound and the most rapid social change of any generation since the beginning of man. *This generation has had to witness the disappearance of more old things and the introduction of more new things and methods than any other generation to date.* Hence, it is only natural that the people now living lack a feeling of social stability. The past has gone out from under them, never to return; the present is in a state of flux, with the reference points changing constantly; and the future is cloudy and full of questions. It's enough to make one's chromosomes turn over in their cells.

'Good Old Days' Gone

The capacity of the human being to tolerate change, however, is great, as has been demonstrated on many occasions. Man's ability to adjust to change when it comes is not the problem that concerns us. We know that he can meet almost any probable change and make a good 'go' of it. What we are discussing here is his psychological attitude toward change before it happens, particularly fundamental changes in the function and structure of the social order.

While there is a general resistance to change, which may on occasion develop into overt antagonism, this resistance has no definable course. It is not against any particular type of social structure nor in favor of any particular type of status quo. *Man's inertia favors that which he has gotten used to and opposes anything that is appreciably different from that.* For example, living in a large city apartment would be just as repugnant to a Navajo Indian as living in a desert hogan would be to a socialite born and raised in a large city. Farmers and city dwellers do not readily adapt to each other's pattern of life. In other words, the individual tends to prefer the pattern to which he has become familiar, although he does have an urge to rise at least one step above
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where he is within that pattern. Thus, adult immigrants to America from Europe never fully abandon their European culture, psychologically, even though their conditions here are immeasurably more comfortable than they were in Europe. They still tend to think of their European place of origin as 'Home,' and to retain a nostalgic longing to revisit the land of their youth. Their descendents, having had no contact with the early 'alien' environment of their parents and grandparents, prefer to stay where they are, in the culture and surroundings with which they themselves have become familiar. In a similar manner, the older people who have grown up in America speak authoritatively and appreciatively of the 'good old days' before all these dubious 'new-fangled' changes came about; *but their children and grandchildren have little appreciation for the way of life about which they are talking.*

Rapid social change, we can be sure, will continue for another generation or more on the North American Continent. From then on, the rate of change probably will level off to a low incline. The Americans who are now growing up will not live out their lives in any pattern much resembling that of their youth. Theirs will be the burden of carrying the greatest degree of social change of any generation, past or future. But the generations following the next one or two will find conditions much more stable and, hence, more psychologically satisfying. They will accept and approve of their circumstances and wonder about the sanity of their ancestors who would endure the 'primitive' and 'barbaric' culture of the mid-Twentieth Century, with its wars, its Free Enterprise, and its political party conventions.

The culture of the New America must contain a number of fundamental changes from that of the old America and of the present transitional America. Among other things, there will be an abundance of goods and services available to everyone, without price. There will be ample free time at the disposal of the individual to do things of his own choosing. There will be much greater security from economic, criminal, 'psycho,' and legal hazards, and from external wars. *But we can be sure that the people of that day will not sit around feeling that their lives are empty, longing for the return of crime, predatory enterprise, political elections, human toil, and scarcity.* The people of that time will have vital interests, enjoyable pursuits, and individual problems. There will be more for them to gain in the way of 'human values' than they will lose. The people will be very similar to the people of today, biologically and psychologically, but they will approach the problems of life with different concepts and different backgrounds of experience. Our descendents also will have values and imponderables, but they will not be the same values and imponderables that we have today.

In America, today, there are many who resent the social changes that are coming. They want to feel that what they cherish will be the same things that their children and grandchildren will cherish. They do not want to feel that the ideals and traditions that they worship will become rubbish tomorrow. Although present day Americans do not live up to the ideals of thrift, hard work, and piety that their grandparents had hoped they would perpetuate, still, they do not want their descendents to cast away the 'true values' which they, themselves, have happened to acquire by circumstances. Many of them would die in battle (or at least sacrifice their sons in battle) to uphold the virtues of debt, corporate enterprise, a republican form of government, and the right to buy real estate in the hereafter. But this generation, with its values and concepts, is a unique generation. There was never one like it before and there will never be one like it again. But the individual Homo sapiens, instead of feeling honored by such a unique position in history, prefers to feel that he is the embodiment of the past, present, and future, all molded into one eternal verity.

Change from Pressure of Events

Any person in tolerable circumstances tends to be egotistical about his own way of life and to delude himself into the belief that other people, living in quite different circumstances, would readily and of their own free will change from their 'unfortunate' way of life to that of his own, given an opportunity to do so. *This is one of the greatest fallacies that at present plagues the American departments of psychological warfare.* If only the people behind the Iron Curtain could be informed of The Truth about our way of life, they believe, the poor souls would enthusiastically overthrow their leaders and rush with open arms to embrace a way of life that is strange to them — the way of Western Freedom. It is incomprehensible to many of us that people 'suffering' under conditions prevailing in Poland and Hungary, for example, should not welcome the 'blessings' of Freedom enjoyed by, say, the Italians and Britons.

It is inevitable that some of the older residents of Eastern Europe, who have had a new pattern of life suddenly imposed upon them, should yearn for the type of business enterprise, political regimentation, and church worship that prevailed in their youths, and that they should be susceptible to being lured with lush promises into fleeing across the border and into the hands of a new tyranny, which they are led to believe more closely resembles that of their youth. But we doubt that any worthwhile proportion of the younger people, conditioned to the 'other' way of life, can be seduced by promises of Western Freedom to come over to our side. We say this, not from

the standpoint of appraisal of the relative merits of the two ways of life, *but from an understanding of the way human beings behave.*

When amateur 'authorities' on human nature dogmatically assert that we can't have social change because 'you can't change human nature,' you can be sure that they are expressing merely their subjective desires and not a resume of scientific knowledge about human behavior. You can *be sure they have a stake of some kind in the status quo*, if nothing more than a psychological addiction to its professed values and traditions. But *it so happens that social change is not dependent upon a change in human nature.* Sure, human nature resists social change; but, once the change is made, the same kind of human nature will hold onto the new milieu and in turn resist further changes from that.

Even though the human being has an internal inertia against change, he is on the whole more apathetic than stubborn. He will go along with change if he is pushed into it, and once this has happened his inertia will prevent his readily going back to the original circumstances. *The great majority will not fight against social change actively.* There will be demagogues who will put up a show of fighting change, in order to protect some 'investment' in the status quo; and there will be those who will fight for a 'return' to some particular pattern, such as laissez faire Free Enterprise, or States Rights. But the advocates of change, whether it is progressive or retrogressive, will find little popular support — that is, active support — unless the immediate conditions are intolerable and the people *have to* move somewhere. When that time comes, the people can just as easily be incited to take destructive action as to move to an improved position. The intellectual reactionaries take the view that destructive action would be for the better — providing it doesn't go too far. They would welcome a restrained destruction of the automatic factories, huge public works, and any strong centralized social control (except the spiritual). Then the world could be 'given back to the people' and all could work long hours producing the requirements of life by hand tool techniques. Their characters would develop, their souls would be saved, and they wouldn't have time to be bored with living.

Technocracy knows the psychological and biological factors which affect human beings who are faced with social change. We know *that people can and will change*, not readily and spontaneously, of course, nor as a result of ordinary means of intellectual persuasion, but *under the pressure of events.* Even under stable conditions, they will gradually accept that which appears to enhance their lot, such as the automobile, the telephone, the radio, and the bathtub. They will tolerate almost anything and eventually accept it as a matter of fact, if it is introduced quietly and gradually enough; for example, smoking of cigarettes by women, or income taxes. Although people do not purposely seek social change if what they have is not too burdensome, still, they will demand a change in the face of a major failure

of the existing system. *Once the social emergency becomes acute, the demand for change will become epidemic by contagion.* Then, you better stay out of the road, Bud, or you'll get trampled under.

Technocracy is aware that the contradictions within the Price System are such that it has become self-destructive. Like the lemmings going down to the sea, the Price System cannot stop or turn back; it can only hurtle forward to total destruction. Its demise is merely a matter of time, and not very much time at that. As its malfunctioning accumulates, an increasing number of people will find their hopes and their planned patterns of life disrupted and their circumstances rendered intolerable. Then they will demand change, not from a desire for change, but from compulsion. And, since they have to change, and as the demand intensifies into a mass emotion, they will want a big change while they're at it. They might as well take the best that is 'on the market.'

Technocracy Offers More

Technocracy offers the people of North America far more than any other organization. In the field of social change, nothing can compete with Technocracy. It offers the people more in the way of material abundance, comfortable living, and long-range security than anything else yet proposed; and it has a sound technological basis, which none of the other movements have. It is 100 percent North American and is tailor-made for this Continent.

Technocrats have a big job ahead of them — the job of giving direction to the greatest mass-movement in history. They are tightening their ranks and getting prepared for the time when a common inquiry on the street will be: *"Listen, Mack, I want to join Technocracy; where do I go to sign up?"*

Wilton Ivie, CHQ